

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL  
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**INFORMANT: PHOMMA SAYASANE [LAOS]  
CONDUCTED BY: MICHAEL BELL  
DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 1987**

**S = SAYASANE  
B = BELL**

**LFP MB-R006**

B: Just to check the levels to make sure the microphone is good, I'll make, I'll announce the date and everything. And then you could give me your name and where you work, just to get the level.

Ah, I'm Michael Bell and today is November 4, 1987. I'm interviewing for The Lowell Folklife Project.

S: Okay. My name Phomma Sayasane. I work for the Region Employment Security in Lowell. I was doing job interviewer for the South East Asian.

B: How long have you worked here?

S: I been with the division since September 9, 1985.

B: That's a long time.

S: I know for two year.

B: Two years.

S: And one month, most two months.

B: Two months? When did you first come to Lowell.

G: I came to Lowell, I would say May 1983. Before that I was living at San Francisco, California for a year and a half.

B: And you went to San Francisco from?

S: From Thailand.

B: From Thailand?

S: Yeah. Because my sponsor is my brother, sponsor me to come to the United State.

B: How long had you been in Thailand?

S: I live in the camp almost two years.

B: Two years?

S: Because I came from Laos back to 1979.

B: And you were born in Laos?

S: Yes. Yes.

B: What year? What's your birth date?

S: Okay. [Laughs] January 6, 1961.

B: Sixty-one? (S: yes) You were very young. Where in Laos?

S: Ah, some part of the Vientiane. Okay, they call like a small town. Like a fifty-mile away from the Vientiane.

B: How do you spell that?

S: The town? (B: Umhm) Viantian you mean? (B: Umhm) V-I-A-N-T-I-A-N. I'm sorry I made the mistake right here. (B: Okay) This should be E instead of A.

B: Oh, V-I-E, V-I-E-N.

S: Yes.

B: Okay. Vientiane?

S: Vientiane.

B: Vientiane. Did you go, did you go to school in Laos?

S: Yeah, I went to high school. And then I went to college for the teaching for three years.

B: To teach?

S: Yeah.

B: What subject? Just (--)

S: Ah, for the elementary school.

B: Young kids.

S: For the young kids. (B: Yeah) I was teaching ah, fifth grade in Laos for a year and a half. And then I decide to escape to camp to Thailand.

B: Umhm. It was very difficult?

S: Ah, not really though. My, my hometown, which is ah, near the Mekong River near the Thailand border. (B: Right) I used to come to visit Thailand a lot when I was young, because my father, he was born in Thailand. I know the way how to get to Thailand. Is a easy way. It wouldn't be any problem for me.

B: Did you go alone?

S: I came with the ah, couple friend of mine.

B: Umhm, but your parents are still in Laos?

S: My parents still in Laos.

B: So when did you learn to speak English? When you came here?

S: I, I study English in the camp, which is how to know basic English, okay. I can't able, I can't be able to speak though in English in the camp, even though I know how to speak. But I, I don't want to speak, because I'm afraid to embarrassing myself. And then every time I, I saw the American people I was scared, you know, (B: to speak) to speak to them.

B: I understand how that would be (S: Okay), I, if I tried to speak ah, Laos or Cambodian (S: Yeah). It would be embarrassing. [laugh].

S: Too. And then I, when I live in San Francisco, California I went to school every day. Start from eight o'clock in the morning and come home about four o'clock in the afternoon, just learning how to speak English.

B: What school did you go to?

S: They call Community College. I mean Community ah, Community College School, that's

what they name it. It's not really college though. For people going, starting English, about training program. Some kind of thing.

B: How did you decide to come to Lowell?

S: I have a couple friend who living here longer than me, okay. He came to the United States back to 1979.

B: Oh yeah.

S: He call me up and say that, "what you doing in California?"

I was collecting money from welfare in California. Went to school the same time. I was ah, not having enough money to support myself even though I live with my, my stepparent and with my brother. I don't have a freedom. I want to have a freedom to live by myself. To support myself, to get a job. That's why I decide to come here. And they told me, friend of mine, they have a lot of job available in this area. So I, that's why I decide to come here.

B: How large, how large is the Laos Community?

S: We don't know the ah, (B: in Lowell I mean) exactly yeah, exactly the number of the Laos Community in here, but every year we try to make estimate. Ah, I would say this year, probably up to fifteen hundred people. Ah, no, fifteen hundred families.

B: Oh!

S: Okay, about ah (--)

B: Five or six to a family?

S: Yes. About ten thousand people. (B: Umhm) Maybe larger, but the Cambodian Community larger than the Lao Community.

B: Do the two communities ah, have a lot in common?

S: [Stumbles on his words] We ah, we all, we eat almost the same thing. We have a same religions. Sample, we have Temple. We have a Monk. Yeah, which is ah, everything a lot ah, almost the same thing, you know, but the language totally different.

B: Totally different.

S: Yes.

B: Do you go to the same Temple?

S: Before we don't have a Temple.

B: With Sao Khon? With the Venerable Sao Khon, or do you have another Temple?

S: Right. Ah, right now we have a Temples for the Loas community, but we still are, some people still going to the Cambodian Temple. This is near by you know, it is convenient for them. And they go because the same thing.

B: Where's the Laotian Temple?

S: That, [laughs] I have the address one time. They gave it to me. But, I remember the other guy from the ah, Office of Employment Training asking me (B: Oh, okay) the address. I tried to find it, but I couldn't. If you need that, you know, I can find it for you.

B: Who's the Monk? Do you know?

S: Ah, he came from [French?] though. I don't know what's his name [unclear] And then everybody like him and want him to stay in here. They promise him everything to support him. Whatever he need they will do it for him. And then he decide to stay here, not that long ago though.

B: Yeah. What are some of the problems facing the Laos community in Lowell now?

S: Ah, for the Laos (--)

B: I mean some of the biggest problems, you know.

S: Yeah. For the Laos Community we would say ah, we didn't have a small problem for the community. Um, like ah, the people jealousy for each others, okay, but other than that we never have any problems.

B: Which people are jealous, ah?

S: Between the community that, that (--)

B: Within the Laos community, or?

S: Yeah, our communities.

B: Within your own community?

S: With our own communities. And the Laotian people they like to work hard though. They don't want to stay on welfare.

B: Right. So other groups are jealous do you think?

S: I would say only the Laos communities jealous and try to make like a, do everything to get ah, like to have everything like everybody else, everybody else have. Like if they bought a

house, one family bought a house, the other family like to do the same thing too.

B: Right. So people work hard.

S: People work hard. Ah, easy for them though. In this area they have a job.

B: Lot's of jobs.

S: A lot of job available for them. They can work two shift you know. Like if they work a first, and then they can work on second.

B: Do many people do that?

S: A lot.

B: Work two shifts?

S: Two shifts, yeah.

B: That's hard.

S: They're still doing that though.

B: Yes.

S: I don't know why.

B: Are women working too?

S: Yes.

B: With families?

S: Yes.

B: Traditionally would a woman work back at home?

S: In my country the women they just stay home. They take care of the kids ah, cook the dinner, and get ah, dinner ready when the husband come.

B: So that's changing here.

S: Changing here.

B: What other sorts of things are changing with the traditional culture?

S: Especially for the kid changing.

B: Yeah, especially.

S: And they won't ah, see, they won't listen to the parents. They think they're right. We can't do that though in our country. The kid to have, they have to behave the parent. Your parents say you don't go and then you can, cannot go. In these (--)

B: They have more freedom here.

S: They have more freedom here. I think our own people though is worried of our generation. They're going back. They want to keep their religions, or our custom, you know, to be the same like Laos. I think that's good idea though, to keep it, you know. And then the kid will give respect to their own people.

B: Right.

S: And helping them.

B: So older people tend to keep the old ways?

S: Yes.

B: But the young people ah, many of them want to change?

S: They don't want to change? Ah, some of them, it might be other question, or anything, I just want to tell you. They have ah, own idea. If they have money they don't want to put money in the bank. They want to keep it by themselves. They're afraid somebody can, going to use their money.

B: That's right.

S: Even they give back their money the same amount. They don't want to take it, because that's not money, their money you know, somebody else money. (B: It's different, yeah) They like to have the same money that they have. Same bill, everything.

B: They don't use credit cards.

S: No. They won't use, a lot of people using though when they bought a house, but I'm talking with the ah (--)

B: Older ones.

S: Not own people. The people have own idea, you know, they never change. I know three family is in Lowell they're doing that. They keep money in their house.

B: Yeah. That's probably not good though.

S: No. No. Not good at all. Ah, last year they have problem. The house on fire. It's burned down. They lost \$15,000. They put them under the mattress.

B: Yeah. Are there people who still know the old, some of the old customs? Like the dances?

S: Yes.

B: The music in the community? Is there a dance group or (--)

S: Yeah, we have dance group in the city, but see if they have ah, like a ceremony, or parties.

B: Yeah, or festival?

S: Festival, something like that. We have to know like a, a month ahead. (B: Umhm) And then can prepare everything. We call people up in their house and this what we going to do. How much money is it going to get, you know.

B: Who's, who should I talk to if I'm, I'd like to?

S: To get ah, to?

B: To maybe photograph the dancing and talk to someone about it?

S: I can give you a name of people you should talk to and phone number.

B: Okay. You have that?

S: Yeah. I do have that.

B: Okay.

S: No, I have it now if you want to have it. Ah, his name is Steve Schith. I have to spell you last name.

B: Okay.

S: S-C-H-I-T-H, I think. He's ah, Project Director of the Laos Organization.

B: Oh. What, what's the name? Is that what it's called? Laos Organization?

S: Laos American Organization. (B: Okay) They're located at 79 High Street, Lowell. The phone number 453-3684. He also speak Laos though.

B: He does?



S: Yeah. He know a lot of thing about the religions, because he used to be a Monk.

B: Oh, okay. Okay.

S: He's a good person to talk to (B: good) about that.

B: Are there musicians too, who play traditional music?

S: I have one guy he did it two year before though. Ah, for the Laos like they have a bam, bamboo like ah, they put together.

B: Umhm, with the flute?

S: For the flute. (B: The flute) And it can make a song. And you can dance with that too though. Very interesting.

B: What's his name?

S: His name Khamstone, K-H-A-M-S-O-N-E. His last name Silavong, S-I-L-A-V-O-N-G.

B: V-O-N-G?

S: Yes. He live at 71 Powell Street.

B: Powell?

S: Yeah. P-O-W-E-L-L (B: yeah) Street, Lowell. The phone number 453-4716.

B: You have a good memory.

S: Ah ha.

B: [Laughs]

S: We talk to him a lot.

B: Okay. Good. I suppose he knows other musicians too, that play.

S: Yes.

B: That play.

S: Yes. He love the music.

B: Good.

S: He tried to have own band.

B: Umhm. Traditional.

S: No like a, like a regular band you know. The music band. Like a (--)

B: Right, but does he want to do popular, traditional, folk music?

S: No, just ah, he play guitar you know. And he love to sing a song and everything.

B: But he also plays the folk music too.

S: Yes.

B: On the flute.

S: Yeah.

B: How about ah, the people in Laos Community when they get sick, and they have a problem, do they go to a medical doctor? Or do they do home remedies? How do they treat an illness?

S: I haven't seen anybody stay home and invite people, their own people come to home though. When they're sick they go to the hospital right away. I don't think that they do it anymore though in here.

B: You don't think they practice traditional medicine, or Chinese medicine or (--)

S: No, they won't do it here. Not that I know. Of course they do it in Laos you know.

B: Ah ha. Right.

S: But some part of the ah, country, in this country they're still doing that though. I heard that. I think that from Providence, or something.

B: Providence, yeah. (S: Yeah) What was, what were some of the traditional medical practices there.

S: Ah, you, if I tell you, you wouldn't believe it though.

B: Sure, I certainly would.

S: Because see they believe in magic in Laos. You do not, if I hate you for example, usually they happen with, between the teenagers. Okay. If you like that girl, she doesn't like you, or she make you upset, or something, and then try to go and talk to somebody, own man that he know the magic, ah magic, and to make that girl go crazy, or make her like I don't know what to say,

and put something inside it, inside you nobody can see it. Like they put ah, glass of butter inside a hair, maybe a some letter inside there. They're doing that.

B: It's like witch craft.

S: That, that hurt her wicked bad. When you go to see a doctor. They give you x-ray everything. They can see nothing inside. Only way you can take it out, you have to go to ah, the people who know that. You have to pay so much money for that too.

B: Is there a name for that?

S: I have no idea. I just heard it though. I don't know it's true or not.

B: No, but do they call that kind of practice in, what do they call that?

S: I don't know the name though, sorry about that, but nobody believe it though. Even their own people they still don't believe it. But some do, some don't.

B: But they don't do it here.

S: I think they still do it here.

B: Do you know anybody who practices that?

S: No. I don't know anybody. I just know that person. He ah, he was telling me that he have something in his body. Somebody told him, the Monk from Connecticut I think, told him that he have to take it out. If you really, if you have money, come back to see me I'll take it out for you. But he didn't mention the name or anything.

B: How would they take it out then?

S: By the ah, they just do it like a, they have special word you know, saying, and then they just blew it at you and they're gone. [Laughs] I don't know. I think it's true though. I heard that a lot, but I really don't keep, but I don't see it by my own eye you know. It never happen to me either.

B: What, in Laos if you were sick would you go to a medical doctor probably?

S: If you sick you would have like a, the root you know, people collecting. They put it [few words unclear] of the thing and it just put inside water and then, and you drink it. (B: Yeah) And make you feel better. If you really sick though, I don't think it help though. They have to go to hospital. That's why they have a hospital in Laos.

B: But does anyone here still know how to use herbs and, some herbal medicine?

S: No.

B: To make those things. Do you know anybody?

S: They wouldn't use it here though.

B: No? They don't have the same plants.

S: They don't have the same plants. Yeah. Right.

B: But you couldn't get them from the store?

S: If you go to China Town, or if you're lucky you (--)

B: Oh, in Boston.

S: Yeah, if you [unclear] looking hard for it you will find it though, but I don't think that you will have a everything like you need

B: Yeah.

S: To make medicine.

B: Are there people who do ah, folk arts and crafts, traditional things? Ah, carve wood, make baskets, or embroidery?

S: No, no in this area.

B: No one in this area?

S: No.

B: Do you think in oh, two or three generations from now the Laos Community will become assimilated? Will be like all Americans?

S: Hard to say that ah, hard to say that, but we try to intend, to keep our custom. We try to teach the kids you know, the right way.

B: What things do you think are important to keep?

S: Ah, you have to work hard on the kid to get them school, learn and how to speak their own language. To be read and write. And beyond that we have to have a strong community, you know, to guiding their own, or to guiding young kid.

B: Are the young kids learning English and Laos both?

S: We try to have our, we have money, okay, to teaching the Laos language, but, Steve Smith he

know it. He have the money. He try to put advertising and spread the word to anybody. But so far we haven't got anybody going.

B: Young kids?

S: Yeah. I think ah, the State, I think they try to give money back though, because nobody interesting.

B: It's hard to get the real young kids to want, or their parents to have them learn to read and write Laotian?

S: It is. I think that's new, you know. Nobody know what important thing is, you know. And they don't pay attention to it. That's all. But every parent they would like to have their kid though, to know how to read and write in their own language, you know. They don't want them to forget it. Later on this they still have the relative, or people in their hometown, they can't write in English then in Laos. You have to be able to write in Laos to them before they can understand. Maybe sooner or later they might forget how to speak Laos though. That's what they're afraid of. Ah, like my nephew. If I say in Laos to them they won't understand at all.

B: How old?

S: Seven years. The other one nine years.

B: And they speak English?

S: They speak English.

B: Like all their, like everybody else.

S: Like anybody else. The old one he know how to understand if I talk Laos to him. He talk back to me in English, but he understand it. (B: Right). But the other two right, can't understand at all. Even talk Laos to them, they're asking, what?

B: Are you, do, are you married?

S: No I'm single.

B: If you get married and have kids will you teach them Laos and?

S: Definitely. Definitely. It's going to be, talking a long time though before I can get married. I don't think I can [laughs] support myself. Right now you're talking marriage, could be a big (--)

B: Do you want to wait until you're(--)

S: Ready. [Both laugh] I don't know. When I come ready, you know, it never.

B: What's the old traditional way of, of getting married? Would a parent, would a parent choose a girl's husband, or?

S: Usually they don't care about if you are a boy, or man though. That they let you decide to marry who you want to marry with. If you are rich family of course you know, you have to [unclear] into the family. But like I'm talking the general, the man you know, they don't care, but were talking female, the girl.

B: Ah ha.

S: If you want to marry the parent have to like that to. Before they decide you to marry with the guy. Some of them though it happen a lot, they didn't even see each other, okay. The parent talking to each others. I have a girl, I have a daughter, I have a son. And I think we should let them marry. And then they marry. And then they live together you know, ever since. Then they will have problem.

B: Traditionally would a married couple live with ah, parents of the husband or?

S: Depends on the, on how big the family size. And if your parents, if I'm parent, okay, I have a like three or four daughters, I know who's the one's going to be bad for us to take care of. Me or my family when I getting old right, I would choose the one to stay with me. And in Laos that's why the people stay with the family, because they have like a farm. And they have a lot of animals, something. If I like that girl when I'm getting old I'm going to give everything to that, that girl.

B: Right.

S: So she have to stay in order to get that thing.

B: Yeah. Do you have an appointment?

S: No, no.

B: Okay. What ah, what do you think about an American system. What are the things that are most different from the Laos?

S: I kind of like the American way, you know, because you have to work. Nobody can give you money free, you know. So in order to stay here you have to work. You have to learn how to support yourself. That's why the coun, the country growing fast you know. In our, in our country like you parent work, you know. And then you get a lot of money and you doing the crazy thing, you know killing people. They can't do everything. They wouldn't like to do it you know, they have money. But some of the thing I don't like you know, like ah, they don't respect the family, own people. I'm not talking generally, I'm talking the people that I know, you know, my neighbor, the friend of mine. They won't realize it though, when they growing, they growing up and then they get a job, they didn't even care help anybody out but themselves you know.

B: Yeah.

S: And they go doing crazy thing, like a drug, or something. And they get involved with some kind of the bad thing. And then they forget everything. I think the ah, I think the situation you know around them nobody tried to talk [unclear].

B: No family, or guidance?

S: No family guidance. See our community we try to teach the kids. If we have to hit them, we hit them. Make them behave so and then they learn. I was talking ah, give you a really example for that I'm not talking the big thing, you know. Other than that they are doing fine, you know, I like it here.

B: What other things are very different? Like ah, food?

S: I have no problem with the food. Okay? Really I think ah, that easy to make the food to eat. For my ah, for our food, okay, in order to make a food to eat (--)

End of tape

LFP-MB-R007

B: I listened to it.

S: Okay.

B: And ah (--)

S: I, I [comment unclear].

B: But we've be, we've been interviewing ah, hundreds of people in Lowell.

S: I see.

B: You know from all ah, all groups.

S: I see.

B: And all communities, and occupations, different religions. To try to get a sense of Lowell, the Lowell Culture. And of course the Southeast Asian community is an important new community in Lowell.

S: I see. What you're trying to do? Like ah, make a book or something?

B: There will be a book.

S: Okay.

B: And all the information, we do photographs, tape recordings, all of this information will be at the Lowell um, the Preservation Commission.

S: I see.

B: In their archives. And also at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

S: How do you get the money to doing these?

B: Ah, in part it's from the Library of Congress.

S: Okay.

B: And some of the money is from The Lowell Historic Preservation Commission, and the National Parks Service too. (S: I see) So.

S: I have, I know the lady in, in Lowell she tried to do a video project you know. She was interviewing me and (B: Ah ha) And tried to put everything on one tape, you know. (B: Oh) They have money to do that. The city give it to them.

B: Who was that?

S: Her name is Ruth Page.

B: Ruth Page?

S: Yeah. P-A- (B: G-E?) G-E.

B: Where does she work?

S: She work by herself, you know. She, she call like a, Page Productions, something like that. This is what they call the agency. She get money from the Gate, Gateway City.

B: Oh, okay. Larry Flynn would know.

S: Larry Flynn, he know about it.

B: Good. Yeah, well I'm interested in, like I'm asking you about ah, traditional Laos culture. What it's like here. How it's changing.



S: Okay. I do understand that.

B: And what you think will, what you think will happen eventually, to the community.

S: I think we're talking in the long run our community they have to, sooner or later they will write off everything you know. Like ah, be American ways. Sooner or later they have to do it if they would like to stay in here for good.

B: But some things will, do you think they will keep some customs though? Religion or, maybe some dance, food? I don't know.

S: I think the food it will keep the same way, you know, because they're more and more the people ah, come and then more and more the food coming from different places. Even they can't grow it here, the food, the food to eat, I don't think it would change the foods.

B: What are, what are some of the foods you're talking about?

S: Ah, like ah, that, that food we cook with every day, you know. Like a day to day.

B: What are some of those foods?

S: We're talking about vegetable. They don't have them here.

B: Like what?

S: They never, ah, American, the American people never eat it.

B: What vegetables? Can you give me the names?

S: Ah. Hm! I don't have that name though, but the smell like a queer thing you know. We making with the special thing with the ah, food. And we make like a raw meat. You know we just cut up small pieces and they didn't even cook it. They just put sauce (B: a marinate, yeah) pepper, and with the whole bunch of vegetables. So it will go with a certain kind of thing you put in there. And they will eat it.

B: But we don't have the vegetables here? You can't get them in the market?

S: You can't buy it from the supermarket. You have to go into the ah, Asian Store, Asian Market Store.

B: Things like noodles, or bean sprouts, or?

S: Yeah, like some kind of thing, noodle. And they have to get a certain kind of thing that come from Thailand, before they can eat it. They won't eat a noodle that they sell in the Supermarket.

B: So you think that more people are buying food from the American Supermarket, and cooking (--)

S: Yes, yes.

B: Still cooking in old ways though? Or

S: Their still cooking their own way.

B: But using American vegetables?

S: Yes, but they have cer, they have to buy a certain kind of vegetable from the Laos Store.

B: Yeah, oh, yeah.

S: Usually, see every week they go to the Supermarket, like ah, everybody else doing. And they're going to end up with going to the Asian Market Store to buy certain things to cook with.

B: Right. What other things do you think will, of Laos culture will stay the same?

S: I think the language will stay. And the food will stay. And, [pause] I don't think of the religions, religions they won't last any longer.

B: Really? The Buddhism?

S: Yeah. Because ah, they teach people [unclear] own way you know. And then, [pause] be hard to make people believe though what they're saying. You have to know what they're talking about. If you go in there, in the Temple, you have to learn special word you know, before you can be able to understand the Monk was talking about. I think it's real hard though. And they're not going to in there sit an hour, an hour listen to it.

B: Are there, are many people going to Christian Churches in the Laos community?

S: Yes, yes.

B: And which, which churches are (--)

S: I think it's Saint ah, what is it? Saint Peter.

B: Catholic?

S: Ah, Saint Patrick Church.

N: Saint Patrick's. It's a Catholic Church?

S: Yes.

B: In the Acre?

S: Yeah, in the Acre.

B: Ah ha.

S: Right.

B: So many people are becoming, they're going to Christian Church?

S: To be honest with you, okay, in my idea I think ah, if they go to church they need to get help from the church. Like ah, they don't have place to stay.

B: Right.

S: Or if they have a problem. They will have ah, somebody will guide them on what to do. That's why they go in the church. But some family though they keep going every Sunday.

B: Sunday, yeah.

S: Yeah.

B: Do you think the respect for elders and the importance of family and discipline, will that change? Become more like, more freedom like American families?

S: I [long pause], hard to say it though, but it will stay. (B: You think so) I believe, yeah. I believe. I think a people they're born with that thing. That they will give another respect their own people, because they're still talking their own language. And I know it. Even though the young kids they can't understand English right now, when they're grown up they will pick it up. They will know how to speak, how to speak Laos and English. Even though they don't go to school, how to speak Laos. They will know automatically. They (--)

B: True. Are there problems with other groups, between the Laos and other, other groups in the city?

S: I (--)

B: This, is it someone you know?

S: [Both laugh] Okay. Ah, [Phomma speaks to someone else. "It can wait?"] Ah, no, no we get along with the community ah, Cambodian community. And we, we have small Vietnamese Community in this area.

B: What about the non-Asian Community? Ah, Hispanic, or Irish, other?

S: We never have that problem with them though. Really. We talk in general things. We're not talking like a small thing you know.

B: Right. In general.

S: Yeah, we never have that problems. I think ah, this city, this area, they love Asian people. I think especially the Mayor, you know. The City Council they understand it. And then they realize it the ah, Asian Community they're, they don't, they're, they don't make a trouble, you know. They won't give the city trouble. And they're all working, not like Hispanic Community. They won't selling like a drug, or something. Killing, stealing things, people thing, you know. We never do that. Ah, I don't know about the Vietnamese Community, but talking the Cambodian and Laos, we never have that problems.

B: Ah ha. How large is the Vietnamese Community? Smaller than the Laos?

S: Really small. I think ah, about two or three fam, ah, two or three hundred families. Not even that big a number. I have no idea. They try to be an organization. And then I think the government find out they don't have any people you know, enough people, to get money to support. And so they wouldn't give them money.

B: Are there other people in the Laos community you think I should talk to?

S: Yes. I know I can give you a name that guy he know a lot better than me, because he work closer with the ah, community every day. His name Khamphou, K-H-A-M-P-H-O-U. Ah, his last name Detamphavanh, D-E-T-A-M-P-H-A-V-A-N-H.

B: [Thomas Bell is trying to pronounce the name.] Detamphavanh?

S: Ah, Khamphou.

B: Khamphou. [He is repeating the name.]

S: Detamphavanh.

B: Detamphavanh. [laugh]

S: Something like that. [laugh]

B: I'm not, [laugh]

S: If you go see Steve Smith right?

B: Ah ha. Right.

S: And he will work in the same building.

B: Oh, okay.

S: But he working with the International Institute.

B: Institute? He works with them?

S: Yeah, he's Case Manager.

B: Oh, okay, good.

S: I, I tried to call him the other day to let him know, because I was mention to you before you left the other day if I can help the other group of people who's (--)

B: That's right.

S: Talking and for myself. I don't know how to talk you know.

B: Did you talk to him?

S: I did call him but, I didn't talk to him. (B: Okay) Like ah,

B: I can probably call him.

S: Yeah, if you call him. I don't think he would mind though. He been doing a lot.

B: Okay.

S: Interviewing.

B: Good. Any, anyone else you think of?

S: When you go see ah, the other one that you how to play traditional music, right? (B: Right) He know everything too.

B: Okay.

S: He, I think he been here longer than anybody else, that guy. He used to be our president of the community, two times.

B: Okay.

S: And he's still on the Board. He vice-president right now.

B: Does he speak English pretty well?

S: Better than me.

B: You speak well?

S: [Laughs]

B: I have no problems understanding you.

S: Okay. Okay, thank you.

B: Thank you.

S: Okay.

B: Ah, I'll let you get back to work.

S: I think so. [Laughs]

B: Would you, could you fill out a little card so (S: sure) I can keep a record of everyone we talk to.

S: Okay.

B: Explains the project.

S: All right. You want me to keep the, where is your home?

?: Address.

B: Is that okay?

S: Sure. [Long pause, reviewing papers] What you mean, field worker?

B: Oh, that's me.

S: Oh, [laughs].

B: And also this gives us permission to put the tape (S: okay) in the Archives. [Long pause]  
Okay, thank you Phomma.

S: Okay. Nice to meet you.

B: I appreciate see you taking time, thank you very much. (S: Okay) Oh, and here's the, if you need to get a hold of me for something.

S: Sure. (B: Okay) Nice meeting you.

B: Thank you. Nice meeting you too.

S: Hope to see you again.

B: You will. I'll be around. Thanks.

INTERVIEW COMES TO AN END